

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Waubay School District  
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2003-2004**

**Team Members:** Chris Sargent and Donna Huber, Education Specialists

**Dates of On Site Visit:** September 5, 2003

**Date of Report:** September 6, 2003

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This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

<b>Promising Practice</b>	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
<b>Meets Requirements</b>	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
<b>Out of Compliance</b>	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
<b>Not applicable</b>	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

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<b>Principle 1 – General Supervision</b>
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

**Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- District/agency instructional staff information
- Suspension and expulsion information
- Statewide assessment information
- Enrollment information
- Placement alternatives

- Disabling conditions
- Exiting information
- Parent surveys
- Referral data
- Publications of child find notices
- Comprehensive plan
- Yearly child find results
- Pre-referral form
- Reviews
- NESC handbook
- File reviews
- Surveys
- School special education expenditures
- Private school information
- Child count data
- SIMs data
- Student IEPs
- Budget
- Workshops and in-service training information
- Area training/TTL
- Continuing education
- Employee handbook
- Board policies

### **Promising practice**

The steering committee concluded that teacher assistance teams provide students with pre-referral assistance. Students are helped in the classroom before a referral is needed. The steering committee also indicated teacher training in AREA reading, TTL and participation in the data retreat as an area of positive practice.

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the district has referral procedures in place and an identified system for receiving and documenting referrals. Students placed out of district are represented by the district at all meetings. Transportation costs are also provided to parents. Relevant school data is used to analyze and review progress toward the state performance goals and indicators. General educators and special educators participated in the data retreat to better understand advanced and proficient levels of accountability. The district adheres to the state guidelines for reporting suspension/expulsion data. The district meets the requirements for certified staff, teacher and paraprofessional training.

## **Validation Results**

### **Promising practice**

Based upon the data reviewed and interviews with staff, the district consistently implements a teacher assistance team (TAT) process at the elementary, middle and high school level. All special education referrals will come through the TAT process unless the referral is made by the parent. Parent referrals result in immediate evaluation. The districts ability to implement this process in a consistent and effective manner has provided assistance for teachers as well as students in determining effective instructional strategies for students who have difficulty in the classroom.

**Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting requirements for general supervision as concluded by the steering committee.

**Out of compliance**

24:05:17:03. Annual report of children served.

The review team was unable to validate an IEP was in effect on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002 for 2 students who were listed on the district's 2002 child count.

<b>Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education</b>
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All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

**Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- State data tables
- Number of students screened
- Preschool information
- School age student information
- Budget information
- Surveys
- Age of referral information
- Personnel training data
- Comprehensive plan
- Personnel development education.

**Promising practice**

The steering committee concluded the district's 2 day a week integrated pre-school program is a promising practice.

**Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the district provides a free appropriate public education for all children with disabilities.

**Validation Results****Promising practice**

The monitoring team agrees with the promising practices identified for free appropriate public education as concluded by the steering committee. The district's preschool program is available at not charge to all district families with children ages 4 and 5 years old. A district teacher provides service to preschool children 2 days a week and teachers Kindergarten 3 days per week. The integrated preschool program is currently providing service to 8 district children.

**Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with the areas identified for free appropriate public education as meeting the requirements.

<b>Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation</b>
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A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

**Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- State data tables
- Teacher file reviews
- Surveys
- Comprehensive plan
- Teacher assistance team information
- Individual education programs
- Parent report forms
- Initial referrals
- Teacher report forms
- Permission to evaluation forms
- File reviews
- Psychological reports
- Report cards
- Progress reports
- Student information system data

**Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded testing instruments used by the district and evaluation procedures meet state requirements. Functional evaluations are completed for students. The IEP team considers all evaluations to determine a category of disability and provides documentation of eligibility determination to parents. Testing procedures utilized by the district to ensure students are appropriately evaluated for eligibility meet the requirements of appropriate evaluation.

**Out of compliance**

The steering committee concluded documentation of parent input into the evaluation process as an area out of compliance under appropriate evaluation.

**Validation Results****Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meets requirements for appropriate evaluation as concluded by the steering committee.

### **Needs improvement**

Through file reviews, the monitoring team found documentation of parent input into evaluation in 6 of 8 files reviewed. Interviews revealed the parent input document used has been modified to include the date sent. A copy of the document will be maintained in the student's record until the original is returned by the parent. The monitoring team could not validate parent input as an area out of compliance, however, concurred this is an area that requires continued improvement.

## **Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards**

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- State data tables
- Teacher file reviews
- Parental rights document
- Consent and prior notice forms
- Public awareness information
- Family Education Rights Privacy disclosure
- Comprehensive plan
- Surrogate parent document
- Surveys
- Special education handbook
- Student file reviews
- School newsletter

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded that parents are fully informed in their native language or another mode of communication of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought. Consent is received for extended school year and evaluation. The district follows the comprehensive plan procedures for confidentiality and record of access. There has not been a complaint or due process hearing requested within the past 4 years.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meets requirements for procedural safeguards as concluded by the steering committee.

#### **Needs improvement**

The district comprehensive plan includes the procedures for the appointment of a surrogate parent. Through interview, the district anticipates the need to make a surrogate parent appointment in the near future and staff was unaware of the appointment process. The district needs to ensure they are prepared to implement the procedures in the comprehensive plan.

## **Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program**

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- File reviews
- Student progress data
- Personnel training
- Budget information
- State data tables
- Report form
- Progress data sheets
- Surveys
- Complaint information
- Individual education programs
- Special education handbook

#### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded that the district has procedures in place for the provision of an appropriate IEP team and that regular education teachers are present at IEP meetings. Written notice contains all required content and is used to invite parents and outside agencies to meetings for students of transition age. Present levels of performance are linked to functional evaluation and contain the student's strengths and weaknesses. Transition services are documented appropriately in student IEPs.

#### **Needs improvement**

The steering committee concluded parent input and how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum is not consistently documented in the present levels of performance.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meets requirements for individualized education program as concluded by the steering committee.

#### **Needs improvement**

The monitoring team agrees parent input is not consistently documented in the present levels of performance as concluded by the steering committee.

#### **Out of compliance**

ARSD: 24:05:27:01.03 Content of individualized education program

Present levels of performance need to include a statement regarding and how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum. Present levels of performance contained the

student's strengths, needs and parent input. The present levels of performance did not contain information regarding how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum in 6 of 8 student files reviewed.

## **Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment**

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- State data tables
- Student file reviews
- Surveys

#### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the district has policies and procedures in place for addressing the least restrictive environment of students. Behavioral intervention plans have been written for students who require them and all placement decisions are made by the IEP team.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting requirements for least restrictive environment as concluded by the steering committee. District policy and procedures were available in the comprehensive plan. Behavior intervention programs were observed in 1 student file and placement decisions were made with appropriate team membership.